(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether his attention has been drawn through a letter regarding the bungling in allotment of STD/ PCO; and

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) Sir, as per earlier instruction STD PCOs could be allotted by two official members of the committee in places where non-official members were not nominated for the STD PCO allotment committees. These allotment committees were dissolved on 31.10.1996 and STD PCO allotment committees were to be reconstituted by including one representative each of the sitting Members of Parliament representing the SSA. These instructions were received by the Telecom District Engineer on 18.12.1996 whereas STD PCOs were allotted by the official members of the committee prior to 18.12.1996.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The following actions have been taken :

(i) All the PCOs sanctioned in Sonipat SSA have been held in abeyance and no further action is being taken on these allotments.

(ii) All the applications received with regard to allotment of STD PCOs are to be scrutinized afresh by the reconstituted committee.

[English]

Construction of Overbridges

4141. SHRIMATI SATWINDER KAUR DHALIWAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that railway crossings on National and State Highways at Khanna, Morinda and Sirhind are remaining closed due to the frequency of trains and road traffic are hampered as a result thereof;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering to construct overbridges at said railway crossings; and

(c) if so, the time by which these overbridges are likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. The level crossings are closed only for safe passing of trains.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Pilgrims Visiting to Mata Vaishno Devi

4142. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state the number of pilgrims visited at Mata Vaishno Devi during 1995-96 and 1996-97, till date?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): According to the information provided by the State Government, the number of pilgrims who visited Mata Vaishno Devi during 1995, 1996 and 1997 (upto February) are as follows :

Year	Number of Pilgrims visited
1995	4032127
1996	4335532
1997 (Upto February)	288220

Production of Steel

4143. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production in Durgapur Steel Plant is less even after its modernisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to send a technical audit team to the above plant for scrutinising the assets of the plant after its modernisation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (d) Work on Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) modernisation started in 1989-90. The main implementation period of DSP modernisation was between 1989-90 and 1993-94. During the last two years as also in the current financial year DSP has been registering increase in production. The details are as under :

('000 tonees)

Year	Actual	
1986-87	751	
1987-88	836	Pre-Modernisation period
1988-89	832	
1994-95	852	Post main implementation
1995-96	947	Period of DSP modernisation
1996-97 (Apr'96-Feb'97)	969	

The capacity of Saleable Steel production which, before modernisation, was 0.938 million tonnes, is expected to go up to 1.586 million tonnes after modernisation.

Production in DSP is progressing satisfactorily, therefore, at present, no technical audit team for asset scrutiny is contemplated.